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EXOAMY AND TOTEMISM DEFINED: A REJOINDER

By A. A. GOLDENWEISER

IT may be deemed unfair to find fault with a review as appreciative as Dr Lowie's examination of my paper on *Totemism* but I trust he will realize that the following remarks are not made in the interests of the writer but for the sake of future totemic discussion.

Dr Lowie takes exception to what he calls my conception of exogamy. He clings to the accepted use of the term "exogamy" as "the rule against members of a group marrying among themselves—in other words, the rule of the incest group."¹ If this definition be adopted "then exogamy may be ascribed to any group prohibiting marriage among its members. In this case, the exogamy of the Kamilaroi class, as well as the exogamy of the Arábana clan, is a derivative feature,—a logical consequence of phratric exogamy. In addition to this derivative (and therefore relatively unimportant) exogamic trait, the Kamilaroi class and the Arábana clan have certain positive marriage-regulating functions, which, however, have nothing to do with exogamy, of which the functions are only prohibitory."² If, on the other hand, my conception of exogamy be adopted—"an exogamous relation is fully represented only when both the group within which marriage is prohibited, and the one into which it is permitted or prescribed" are given"³—then "the mutual relationship of intermarrying classes with rules against intra-class marriage would form the standard illustration of exogamy; phratries would formally, but for reasons just given, might *only* formally, exemplify exogamy; and it would be inadmissible to speak glibly of four exogamous Tsimshian clans, of a great number of exogamous Khasi clans, of fourteen exogamous Bahima clans

¹ *American Anthropologist*, April-June, 1911, p. 196.

² *Ibid.*, p. 197.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

and forty-one exogamous septs."¹ Dr Lowie particularly insists that wherever we have only two exogamous intermarrying groups the positive marriage-regulation need not, although it may, be a psychological factor; for in such cases, whether there be any positive regulation or not, "intermarriage follows as a physical necessity; the group into which marriage is permitted or prescribed is determined by the mere statement of the prohibitory regulations."²

On page 237³ of my article on totemism,⁴ I write: "Exogamy, of course, literally, means 'marriage without or outside of' (a certain group)—an imperative which has its negative correlate in the prohibition of marriage within the group." This statement is somewhat misleading for, contrary to the etymological connotation of the term, it is the prohibitory aspect of exogamy which is emphasized in current usage, as Dr Lowie correctly notes. Throughout my paper, however, I stick to this customary use of the term (see, *e. g.*, page 187 with reference to the Tsimshian; page 231 with reference to the Khasis, Meithei, Mikirs, Nandi, Gros Ventres, etc.; page 236 with reference to the Todas; etc.).

This use of the term "exogamy" does not, however, compel us to regard the exogamy of the Kamilaroi class or the Arábana clan as a derivative feature, "a logical consequence of phratric exogamy." From the genetic point of view Dr Lowie may be right; the class and the clan in the above instances may have been exogamous as parts of phratries before they themselves became marriage-regulating units. But speaking psychologically—and, Dr Lowie will admit, we must here speak psychologically—the marriage prohibition within the Kamilaroi class and the Arábana clan is an independent, not a derivative, feature. Internal evidence apart, this follows from the function of these groups as social units into which marriage is prescribed. Negative marriage regulation does not involve definite, positive marriage regulation: an incest group may have the most varying positive marital rights. The reverse, however, is not true; positive marriage regulation deter-

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 196-197.

² *Ibid.*, p. 196.

³ To find corresponding page of the reprint, substract 178.

⁴ *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, April-June, 1910.

mines definite negative marriage regulation, for the prescription for all members of a group to marry into another equivalent group, and *vice versa*, carries with it as a *psychological* correlate the prohibition of marrying within the group. To speak of positive marriage-regulating functions as having "nothing to do with exogamy, of which the functions are only prohibitory," is to close one's eyes on the facts. This is no longer a matter of terminology. Positive and negative marriage regulations, as we find them in innumerable communities, are most intimately correlated. This is conspicuously true of those instances in which marriage is regulated by degrees of relationship, as in Central Australia, among the Toda, the Gilyak, etc. To definite relationship groups within which marriage is prohibited correspond definite relationship groups into which marriage is prescribed. From these are sharply differentiated those groups within which marriage is simply approved of or disapproved of. The correlation between these negative and positive regulations is scarcely less complete in the case of two intermarrying phratries or classes, as in British Columbia, in ancient times probably among the Iroquois and many Siouan and Algonkin tribes, in wide cultural districts of Australia and Melanesia. Of course, we must admit as a logical possibility Dr Lowie's point that, whenever we have merely two intermarrying groups, they "might *only* formally exemplify exogamy" for in such cases "intermarriage follows as a physical necessity." I doubt, however, whether this logical possibility is ever realized. Without here furnishing the evidence, I contend that in Australia as well as in Melanesia the positive regulation would, on inspection, be found to be a psychological factor in the marriages of the two moieties, just as it is among the Haida where the two "sides" "show respect" to each other by intermarrying. Finally, in such cases as are presented by the Toda clans, or the Indian gotras, or, in North America, by the clans of the Indian tribes of the Southwest, each exogamous group may marry into any of the others. Only in the latter instances is the positive side, as a psychological factor, either vague or absent. To this I should like to add, for the present merely as a suggestion, that the numerous instances of progressive

extension of marriage regulations (see *Totemism*, pp. 243-5), may perhaps be conceived as a general tendency for relatively indefinite marriage regulations to become definite and standardized.

I feel that the terms "exogamous relation" and "exogamous unit," as used in my article, do not suffice to cover the concepts involved in the various phases of marriage regulations. It may not be out of place to submit here a few terms and definitions.

A group which does not marry within itself is *exogamous*.

If a group is exogamous in its own right, it is an *exogamous unit*.¹

An exogamous unit of which only the prohibitive functions are in evidence, is a *negative exogamous unit*. If the positive regulations are also defined the group is a *definite exogamous unit*.²

Intermarrying exogamous groups stand to each other in an *exogamous relation*.

If the positive regulations are vague or absent, we have an *indefinite exogamous relation*. If the negative and positive regulations are fixed, we have a *definite exogamous relation*.

If a group is not exogamous in its own right, its exogamy is *derivative*.

The following self-explanatory terms may also prove useful: *positive and negative marriage regulations*, or *matrimonial restrictions* and *matrimonial prescriptions*.

Dr Lowie's second stricture refers to my definition of totemism as a process of specific socialization. Says Dr. Lowie: "He does not merely hold that totemism is the result of a secondary association of social units with various factors. He holds in addition, that the association resulted from the fact that objects and symbols which were originally of emotional value only to individuals became, through descent, values for definite social groups."³ Having thus put before the reader my conception of totemism as expressed in the definition, Dr Lowie asks two questions: "In how far does it accurately represent the phenomena commonly designated as totemic? And, to what extent does it represent the totality of phenomena which seem psychologically and sociologically related

¹ In this sense the term is used in *Totemism*, p. 237.

² This term corresponds to "exogamous unit" in my *Totemism*, except on p. 237.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

with these totemic phenomena?"¹ I shall not here attempt to answer the second query, beyond noting that I am inclined to agree with Dr Lowie's remarks on the relation between totemic phenomena and religious societies. However, as I intend in due time to deal with this subject at some length, I prefer to leave the question open for the present. The first query Dr Lowie answers in the negative; my definition does not accurately represent totemic phenomena for, although "it must be admitted that the author's definition outlines a plausible course of development, . . . it is possible to conceive that conditions other than those defined by Dr Goldenweiser may lead to typical totemism."² "What evidence is there," protests my critic, "to show that among the Iroquois the clan name was originally an individual possession which, through descent, became socialized?" And again, "If we assume the association of name and social group as the starting point of totemism, and, as the author himself has shown, this combination sometimes exhausts the content of totemism, it is, in our ignorance of the actual history of the development, impossible either to prove or to refute the theory that the group names, not only in the Iroquois, but in the Australian cases as well, ever served to designate individuals."³ The same reasoning would apply to taboos. In a word, socialization as a factor in totemic associations, is not a *Denknotwendigkeit*. "The critic is therefore of opinion," he concludes, "that a non-committal attitude on the process of association (so far as it eludes observation) is highly advisable. Totemism would then be defined, not as a *socialization* of various elements of (at least potentially) emotional value, but merely as the *association* of such elements with social groups."⁴

It is unfortunate that Dr Lowie should have misunderstood me on this point. I do not hold the view of socialization he attributes to me, nor was I in the least aware when defining totemism as a process of specific socialization, of propounding a theory of the origin of totemism.

¹ *Totemism*, p. 204.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

Again, Dr Lowie's error may be due to a vagueness of statement on my part. The words "objects and symbols which are originally of emotional value for individuals become through their totemic association transformed into social factors, referring to social units which are clearly defined,"¹ may be misleading. However, Dr Lowie could not possibly have misunderstood my statements on page 271. "The intimacy of the above associations could never become so absolute if not for the fact that the various elements, religious, aesthetic, ceremonial, and what not, become linked with definite social units (say, the clans), of which they henceforth become the prerogatives and symbols. This association with social units is what constitutes the peculiarity of totemic combinations. *Elements which are per se indifferent or vague in their social bearings,*² such as dances, songs, carvings, rituals, names, etc., become associated with clearly defined social groups, and, by virtue of such association, themselves become transformed into social values, not merely intensified in degree, but definite and specific in character."³ The process is somewhat further elaborated in the following paragraph. Now this transformation into definite social values is what I call *specific socialization*. I also say: "The one obvious and important means by which the association with definite social groups is accomplished is *descent*."⁴ And my conception of the function of descent in this connection appears from the following sentence: "In clan totemism we start with a social group which in some way has acquired a totem, whether it be a worshipped or tabooed animal or plant, or merely a name [*cf.* Dr Lowie's own hypothetical instance on page 204 of his review]. Descent becomes henceforth a factor which tends to perpetuate the totemic clan as a social unit, as well as to consolidate it with those other elements which may from time to time become associated with it." And again: "In clan totemism, then, the social group is, for totemic purposes, the starting point."⁵

¹ *Totemism*, p. 275.

² In the original these words are not italicized.

³ *Totemism*, p. 271.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 271.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

It is very curious that Dr Lowie represents me as holding that my definition of totemism is based on assumptions such as that the clan names of the Iroquois or Australians designated individuals before they were applied to social groups, etc. This, of course, is the theory of the origin of totemism held by Hill-Tout, only that he starts, not with an individual taboo, or name, but with an individual guardian spirit. Dr Lowie has read my refutation of this theory,¹ of which Frazer's *conceptional* totemism is a variant. I admit the possibility of such development, although there can be little doubt that, if origins were laid bare, the social group would in a great majority of cases be found at the very inception of the totemic process. One road to totemism may lead over the individual taboo, name, or guardian spirit, but it has not been an oft trodden road.

All this by the way, however, for, as I stated before, my definition of totemism does not involve *any* theory as to the origin of the institution. The connotations of the term "socialization," as used in the definition, are primarily psychological, not genetic. Dr Lowie seems to agree with the first definition in which the process is described from the point of view of the social units. Now, in the second and third definitions, I merely attempt to express the process in psychological terms, using the "emotional values" as the starting point. No new elements, or concepts, or hypotheses, are added. Social units become associated with objects of emotional value, or the objects become associated with social units, become *socialized*. As the social units are sharply defined, the socialization is *specific*. To take Dr Lowie's schematic example. Group *A* and group *B* have each certain taboos. The groups combine. Have we totemism? Not necessarily. For the result may be simply a larger group *C*, some of the members of which observe the taboos of former group *A*, others the taboos of group *B*. But *A* and *B* may combine while preserving their identity. They may thus become definite social units (say, clans) and the taboos, if practiced by the clans as social units, would then be *socialized* within the clans, forming the nucleus of a totemic community.

¹ *Totemism*, pp. 268-9.

But there is really no need of such hypothetical constructions, for the term "socialization" is nothing but a description in psychological terms of what we actually find in totemic communities. The totem, as well as the concomitant beliefs, ceremonies, artistic representations, etc., are in totemic groups, always *socialized* within the social units to which they refer; they are their prerogatives, or symbols. Such a condition can not be regarded as primary; the specific socialization of a belief or practice is, of course, a psychological process in the minds of the individuals constituting the social unit. In the formative period of a totemic complex, this process must proceed for some time (say, several generations) before the new psycho-sociological relation becomes a fixed factor in the social consciousness of the group, although in a developed totemic community the time necessary for the socialization of a new totemic feature may be very brief indeed. In so far, then, as the connection between the socialized object and the social unit, while "in the making," must be conceived as a process, but only in so far, the term "socialization" is not merely psychologically descriptive but also genetic.

I should like to add a few words as to the application of the concept of convergent evolution to totemic phenomena. I think I have shown, as Dr Lowie insists, that totemic complexes must be regarded as the product of convergent evolution. On the other hand, all totemic complexes are genetically determined and psychologically constituted by the fact that the component social units of the complexes become *associated* with the various totemic features, or that the totemic features become *socialized* within the limits of the social units. This functional factor in all totemic complexes, whether we call it totemism or not, seems to be a constant. Moreover, it can not itself be conceived as a product of convergent evolution, but seems to be a primary socio-psychological fact.

This interpretation does not militate against the conception of totemic complexes as products of convergent developments. On the contrary, it brings the conception into relief by suggesting that the tendency to specific socialization reduces to a common denomi-

nator the heterogeneous ethnic factors that go to the making of a totemic complex, by bringing them into that intimate relation with social units which is so characteristic of totemic communities.

In closing I want to join Dr Lowie in his final estimate of my work. My study was "not definitive, but programmatic." I have merely, "given a statement of first principles . . . The next step must be a more extensive ethnographic investigation of the field."¹

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¹ *Totemism*, p. 206.